

The monthly examinations in each division is for promotion in the division. It is partially oral and partially written. It is generally a review of what has been gone over during the month. I find them answer a very good purpose. They accustom the pupils to express their thoughts on paper; they afford the teacher an opportunity of finding out whether the pupils have fully mastered their work, and they act as a healthy stimulus on the whole division, for the desire to get higher in the division is very great.

The examination for prizes takes place once a year, and it is conducted in a similar manner to the monthly examinations, only it is more comprehensive and is more exclusively a written one. There are two or three prizes awarded in each subject, in each division, and the pupils well know that those who get the greatest number of marks, get the prizes. The prizes for attendance and good conduct are awarded by reference to the register. This plan generally affords satisfaction, but it hardly affords sufficient encouragement to the junior members of the division.

It affords me pleasure to know that there is a growing desire on the part of teachers and parents to make a greater use of prizes in schools. The principle is generally considered a sound one, and all that is wanted is some fair impartial manner of awarding them, and one, too, that will reward the faithful, plodding pupil, as well as the talented one.

Mr. McCallum, of Hamilton, informs me that they make use of cards in the following manner. At the end of the week a card is given to each pupil that has had all the recitations perfect and has not been late or absent during the week. Then at the end of the year only those who have received a certain number of cards are allowed to compete for the prizes.

I have been assured lately by many teachers that, if some regular system of giving cards could be adopted, the distribution of prizes would be much more general than at present.

I remain, yours truly,
JAMES CARLYLE.

BOYS' MODEL SCHOOL, 1865.

4. REPORT ON PRIZES IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

To the Board of School Trustees, Hamilton :

GENTLEMEN,—Educationalists are divided on the question of establishing prizes in schools. Some of them maintain the influence exerted to be injurious, while others as stoutly maintain the influence healthy, and as a means to an end to be used with great success. Some contend that in the prize system the appeal is to the selfish and least noble part of our nature, that it is next to impossible to award them to the really deserving, and that while the few may be stimulated to over-exertion, the many will plod along the pathway of learning just the same, whether prizes be awarded or not. Winds and waves may ruffle the surface of the ocean, but at the depth of a few feet their influence is never felt. The following are some of the reasons that may be urged in favor of giving the system a fair trial in our City Schools :

1. Every college in Canada offers prizes for competition.

Upper Canada College offers annually seven exhibitions, two, value of each \$120, two, value of each \$80, three, value of each \$40; also prizes, &c.

Victoria College, gold and silver medals, prizes, &c.

Queen's College, scholarships, bursaries, &c.

Trinity College, scholarships, &c.

Magill College, scholarships, prizes, &c.

Toronto University and College annually bestow scholarships, medals, prizes, and certificates of honor.

2. In most, if not all, cities of Canada West prizes are awarded in common schools; witness, Toronto, London and Brantford. In Toronto and London the influence exerted in the common schools, according to information received from G. A. Barber, Esq., and S. B. Boyle, Esq., is highly beneficial.

3. The Prince of Wales left a sum of money in quite a number of our colleges, the interest of which is to be distributed as prizes.

4. The highest authority in our country on educational matters, Dr. Ryerson, our Chief Superintendent, thus refers to the subject :

"The expediency of establishing prizes in schools is an unsettled question among educationalists. The influence exerted by prizes in a school is said to be injurious, owing to the animosity and undue rivalry which it is alleged are created. This may be true in some cases, where an impression of favoritism is created in the minds of the pupils; but an active and honorable rivalry to excel can never be otherwise than beneficial. It pervades every class of society. Its existence has long been recognized and encouraged in the best schools and colleges in England; as well as in Canada; and the desire expressed by many persons connected with our public schools

to establish prizes in the schools has induced the Chief Superintendent of Education to afford every facility to do so. For this purpose he will grant one hundred per cent. upon all moneys transmitted to him by municipalities or Boards of school trustees, for the purchase of books or reward cards specified in the annexed list, for distribution as prizes in grammar and common schools."

He has sanctioned the system, and has done more than any other man in Canada to introduce it into our Grammar and Common Schools, by making the excellent and liberal arrangement that all monies sent to the Educational Department for prizes shall be doubled. He has introduced them into the Provincial Model Schools. The Masters of the Normal School, both of whom were wont to oppose the whole system, now go heartily in its favor.

5. The late lamented Lord Elgin approved of this system, for when Gov. Gen. in this country he established two prizes for proficiency in Agricultural Chemistry, (one of \$32, the other of \$20,) to be awarded twice a year in our Prov. N. School. All the Teachers in the Central School are in favor of continuing the system. Some of them have given more "Honor Cards" during the past two months than they did during the whole of last year. This they attribute to the expectation of prizes next fall by their pupils.

6. I presume the mead of praise in having the most complete, thorough, and comprehensive system of schools in the world, must be awarded to the City of Boston.—For seventy years the system of prizes has been pursued. To one of her most gifted sons, Dr. Franklin, Boston is indebted for the initiative in this respect. This shrewd observer of nature in man no less than in the laws by which the physical world is governed, willed £100 Stg., the interest of which annually and forever was to be distributed in prizes in shape of silver medals, in the free schools of his native town. The £100 has now, by what means doth not appear, increased to \$1,000. Some fifteen hundred boys have had the honor of being enrolled as "Franklin's Prize Boys." In 1821, the City Medal was instituted for girls, for by an illiberal construction of Dr. Franklin's Will, girls were not allowed to compete for his prizes. The city medal was simply an extension of the plan of the Franklin medal. The same rules govern the distribution of both, and they are of the same intrinsic value. Both were formerly bestowed for the "encouragement of scholarship" alone. More recently meritorious deportment as well as scholarship has been made a condition necessary to entitle a pupil to a reward. For a number of years a difference of opinion prevailed respecting the utility of such medals as prizes. In 1847, the medals were withdrawn, on the ground that they produced so much emulation. In 1848, the medals were restored. In 1845, the Hon. Abbot Lawrence presented to the City of Boston the handsome donation of \$2,000, to found the Lawrence Prizes; at the same time stating, "I beg to present you my thanks for the opportunity afforded me of bearing testimony to the high estimation I have always placed upon all our public schools, and the interest I still entertain for their prosperity. It is my desire that the subjects for prizes be so arranged and distributed as to operate on all classes of the school, the lowest as well as the highest." He desired that a portion of the interest "should be apportioned to the reward of those whose industry and diligent application, manifest a desire to improve, though the least gifted by nature; and also a portion for good conduct in general, embracing moral rectitude and gentlemanlike deportment."

I should mention that the late David Page, M.A., Principal of the Normal School, Albany, in his excellent treatise on the Theory and Practice of Teaching, is entirely opposed to the prize system.

In almost, if not all, the British Universities, this system is patronized. So long have they been established in some of those seats of learning, that, like the freedom of the city of London, the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. Fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, prizes, and premiums seem to have full sway there. And where else are there such institutions and such scholars?

The venerable Lord Brougham, in his inaugural address as President of the Association for the promotion of Social Science, thus refers to the subject of prizes in schools :—

"It would be wrong to pass over the fact of the Scotch system having for more than a century anticipated the important step of late taken in England, of granting substantial advantages to competitive examination. Reference is here made to the general course of advancement by bursaries in the schools, and by exhibitions in the universities, of which there are only a few instances out of Scotland. These benefits extend to all ranks. A distinguished professor in one university had in early years worked at his father's loom. A learned friend of mine, who became Judge in the Supreme Court, owed his education at Oxford to an exhibition from Glasgow College. He was a baronet's son; but the son of a peasant on his estate might have gained the same place at Oxford, and then, instead of being called to the Bar, would probably have gone into the